

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1 and 9 have been amended. New claim 10 has been added. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 1,733,034 to Tufenkjian ("Tufenkjian") in view of U.S. Patent No. U.S. Patent No. 4,826,249 to Bradbury ("Bradbury"). Independent claim 1 relates to an adaptive pneumatic seat cushion and backrest cushion for vehicles and aeroplanes. Applicant respectfully submits that the cited combination of Tufenkjian and Bradbury fails to disclose at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 1, namely, a plurality of low-elasticity textile tubular pockets arranged side by side such that adjacent sides of each tubular pocket are in direct contact along areas therebetween and are directly interconnected via seams. In addition, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited combination of Tufenkjian and Bradbury fails to disclose that dimensions of a shell in relation to each one of the plurality of pouches is such that when the plurality of pouches are filled with compressed air, each one of the plurality of pouches is pressurized resulting in each one of the plurality of pouches being compressed relative to adjacent pouches and wherein outermost pouches are operable to be compressed against the shell causing the shell to be tensioned. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited combination of Tufenkjian and Bradbury fails to disclose that a top surface of the tensioned shell and not the plurality of tubular pockets forms an actual seat or backrest surface resulting in a better comfort and feel of the seat and backrest cushion.

Tufenkjian is directed to a pneumatic mattress that includes a plurality of tubes 1 formed of rubber or another resilient material. The tubes 1 are held in spaced relation by a cover 2 formed with casings 3 to receive the tubes 1. Portions of the cover 2 between the casings 3 form strips 4 which separate adjacent ones of the casings 3.

Bradbury is directed to a thin inflatable elastomeric vehicle seat that includes a pair of elastomeric sheets that are heat sealed together to define a peripheral manifold and discrete horizontal sections. The horizontal sections are pressurized with a gas to stretch the elastomeric material into its hysteresis range and then attach the same to a frame to provide a cushioned seat. Bradbury has been cited as teaching use of the same cushioned structure for a seat cushion and a backrest cushion.

In contrast to independent claim 1, Tufenkjian merely discloses a plurality of tubes 1 *held in a spaced relation* by strips 4 that are disposed *between* the plurality of tubes 1, not side by side such that adjacent sides of each tubular pocket are *in direct contact* along areas therebetween and are *directly interconnected* via seams as required by independent claim 1. Bradbury contains no disclosure whatsoever regarding these claim limitations.

In addition, the pneumatic mattress or cushion as disclosed in Tufenkjian comprises portions which are filled with air. When the plurality of tubes 1 are inflated, air chambers 14 are formed between the plurality of tubes 1 and the cover 2. As such, according to Tufenkjian, there is compressed air between the plurality of tubes 1 and the cover 2 and the compressed air in the air chambers 14 supports a person sitting on the pneumatic cushion of Tufenkjian. In contrast, according to independent claim 1, each one of the plurality of pressurized pouches results in each one of the plurality of pouches to be compressed causing the shell to be tensioned such that a top surface of the tensioned shell and not the plurality of tubular pockets forms an actual seat or backrest surface resulting in a better comfort and feel of the seat and backrest cushion. Tufenkjian contains no disclosure whatsoever regarding the cover 2 being tensioned. Applicant respectfully submits that there is no need for the cover 2 of Tufenkjian to be tensioned as the plurality of tubes 1 and the air chambers 14 provide support for a person sitting on the pneumatic cushion of Tufenkjian. Applicant respectfully submits that Bradbury fails to cure the deficiencies noted above of Tufenkjian.

For the reasons stated above, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 distinguishes over the cited combination of Tufenkjian and Bradbury and respectfully requests that the rejection thereof be withdrawn.

Claims 2-6 and 8 depend from and further limit independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. These dependent claims are therefore deemed to distinguish over the cited combination of Tufenkjian and Bradbury for at least the same reasons as those set forth above relative to the rejection of independent claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 2-6 and 8 as obvious over the cited combination of Tufenkjian and Bradbury is respectfully requested.

Claim 7 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tufenkjian in view of Bradbury, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,965,899 to Sekido, et al. ("Sekido"). Claim 7 depends from, and further restricts in a patentable sense, independent claim 1. For the reasons set forth above with regard to amended claim 1, claim 7 is patentable over Tufenkjian and Bradbury. The mere addition of Sekido does not cure the deficiencies of Tufenkjian and Bradbury as references.

Independent claim 9 relates to an adaptive pneumatic seat cushion and backrest cushion for vehicles and aeroplanes. Applicant respectfully submits that the cited combination of Tufenkjian, Bradbury, and Sekido fails to disclose at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 9, namely, a plurality of low-elasticity textile tubular pockets, each tubular pocket having an elongated axis defined by a length of the tubular pocket, the tubular pockets arranged side by side such that adjacent sides of each tubular pocket are in direct contact along areas therebetween and are directly interconnected via seams and wherein, when the plurality of pouches are filled with compressed air, each one of the plurality of pouches is pressurized resulting in the shell being tensioned. In addition, Applicant submits that claim 9 patentably distinguishes over Tufenkjian and Bradbury for similar reasons to those discussed above with respect to independent claim 1. The mere addition of Sekido does not cure the deficiencies of Tufenkjian and Bradbury as references. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claim 9 as unpatentable over Tufenkjian, Bradbury, and Sekido be withdrawn.

New independent claim 10 also relates to an adaptive pneumatic seat and backrest cushion similar to amended independent claims 1 and 9. Independent claim 10 contains the further limitation that a width of the shell is smaller than a width of the plurality of tubular pockets when the plurality of pouches are pressurized and wherein, when the plurality of pouches are pressurized, each one of the plurality of pouches is compressed relative to other pouches causing the shell to be tensioned. This additional limitation is not disclosed in any reference relied upon by the Examiner. For at least this reason, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 10 is in condition for allowance.

In view of the above amendment, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. A Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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